
Spirituality in Music Education: Respecting and Elevating Students with Music

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Spiritual Music Education promotes deep, meaningful connections between teachers, students, and their music making. A spiritual approach focuses on every aspect of the student's human dimension-physical, emotional and cognitive-respecting and supporting each dimension equally. Consequently, students engage in music with increased body strength, clearer understanding, boundless creativity and heightened enjoyment. Most importantly, a spiritual music education instills a positive musical outlook for life. Six areas of spiritual music education are explored which are relevant to all vocal and instrumental disciplines, pre-school through adulthood: The definition of "spirit" according to 20th century music philosophers, children revealing their deepest sense of spirituality, clarifying the difference between spirituality and sacredness to adhere to the laws separating church and state, multiculturalism in music education, applying spiritual philosophies of general education to music education, and a "SPIRIT" mnemonic that reminds teachers and students that spirituality in today's music class creates a meaningful musical outlook that resonates for a lifetime.

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David Elliott (1995) claims that "Music education improves one's health, mind and soul" (p. 13).¹ Twentieth century educators are becoming increasingly aware of, and responsive to, children's spiritual needs. The arts, and particularly music, possess creative and critical thinking elements to nurture the spiritual needs of children. A spiritual musical environment is both a reflection of, and an inspiration to, the entire school community.

This paper explores six areas of spiritual music education: In section one, the word "spirit" is defined in its relationship to the writings of twentieth century music education philosophers. Following this, children's personal sense of spirituality is explored. Given the laws separating church and state, it is important to clarify spirituality versus sacredness. Section three delineates the differences between spirituality in religion and spirituality in the secular world of public schools. Since a spiritual approach acknowledges the student's cultural background, section four discusses the power of multicultural music education. Section five, which forms the heart of the paper, applies spiritual philosophies of general education into the music classroom. Implications are explored with examples of successful music lessons. This paper concludes with section six, offering additional thoughts and a summarizing spiritual mnemonic.

Defining Spirituality

Harkening back to Roman civilization, the word *spirituality* originates from the Latin *spiritus*: breath. More recently, *spirit* is defined as the "vital principle or animating force with living beings."² Combining the ancient and modern definitions makes one's spirit akin to one's breath. The spirit, like breathing, keeps a person alive. The National Curriculum Council (1993) in the United Kingdom defines spirituality as:

something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses and/or expressed through everyday language. It has to do with the universal search for individual identity - with our responses to challenging experiences, such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and evil. It has to do with the search for meaning and purpose in life and for values by which to live.³

A spiritual approach to music education recognizes that each student has a unique spirit. I define this unique spirit as the student's inner core. This inner core includes personality, physical self-image, emotional self-image and learning style. A spiritual music educator understands that a music class must respect each student's inner core to keep the students emotionally, physically and cognitively alive, particularly during life's most stressful and troubling times. The tragic events on September 11, 2001 at the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and in Pennsylvania attest to teachers needing to respect inner core sensitivity.

Several twentieth century music education philosophers use the word "feelings" when referring to the student's spirit. Keith Swanwick (1979) states that music "helps us explore feelings because music structures feelings" (p. 112).⁴ Bennett Reimer (1989) writes:

The major function of art is to make objective, and therefore conceivable, the subjective realm of human responsiveness. Art does this by capturing and presenting in its aesthetic qualities the patterns and forms of human feelingfulness. The major function of aesthetic education is to make accessible the insights into human feelingfulness contained in the aesthetic qualities of things. Aesthetic education, then, can be regarded as the education of feeling. (p.39)⁵

David J. Elliott (1995) supports Susanne K. Langer's feeling-philosophy of music

education:

the aesthetic qualities of musical works capture and represent the general forms of view, listening to music aesthetically provides listeners with a special kind of knowledge or "insight" into the general forms that feelings supposedly take....She concludes that if "the arts objectify subjective reality, then art education is the education of human feeling" (p. 28).⁶

Violin educator, Shinichi Suzuki, describes his spiritual philosophy of violin education in his book, *To Learn with Love, A Companion for Suzuki Parents* Suzuki describes the layers of students' feelings in his book, which include positive and negative transfer, perfectionism, fear of success and boredom. All of these philosophers agree that feelings and musicking are integrated into the same fabric of the artistic human experience.

First and foremost, music educators must be in touch with their sense of spirituality, before they can successfully implement a spiritual approach in the classroom. This process of finding one's personal sense of spirituality requires respecting one's own inner core dimensions: personality, physical self-image, emotional self-image and learning style. The music educator has an advantage in finding his/her inner core due to the nature of music itself. Elliott (1995) states, "In addition to and underlying all the various purposes for which music is made are the central values of music making as a human pursuit: self-growth, self-knowledge, and enjoyment." (p. 120)⁷

A spiritual classroom environment supports three constant ideals of respect, compassion and flexibility: 1. Respect is demonstrated toward one another and toward oneself. 2. A compassionate climate leads to healthier emotional bonds leading to greater educational cooperation between the students and their teacher. 3. Greater flexibility with learning goals nurtures and challenges intellectual complexity. Elliott (1995) agrees that music making propels the self to higher levels of complexity. "As a student's level of musicianship progresses

in complexity to meet the demands of increasingly intricate works, all aspects of consciousness are likewise propelled upward" (p.122).⁸ By upholding these three music classroom fundamentals, the student's musical experiences are more successful. The teacher also experiences increased success.

A spiritual approach to music education encourages teachers and students to universally experience music through their inner cores, the local community, the planet earth and the world beyond. As Laurie Lane-Zucker (1999), managing director of the Orion Society has written, "Restore the heart to education, return our gaze to our own home ground, dwell artfully and joyfully within the essential mystery of life."⁹

Seeking and Respecting Children's Spirituality

In order to teach students with spirituality, it is imperative to respect students' sense of spirituality. Dr. Robert Coles, professor of psychiatry and medical humanities at Harvard University, dedicated 30 years to researching children's spirituality across the United States and the world. Coles met with hundreds of children, whose spirituality was developed at home, churches, synagogues and mosques. Coles (1990) discovered that children "are drawn to soul-searching, even though religion is no great part of their lives" (p. 295).¹⁰ Coles engaged students in meaningful conversations and emotional debates about spirituality. He also encouraged creative forms of spiritual expression through writing, drawing and painting. During a number of these interactions, Coles (1990) discovered students' spiritual connection through music. One inner city child wrote about his personal connection to God through singing in church:

I was singing in church last Sunday, and I thought that God must be enjoying us, because we were hitting all the notes right! Then, when we were through, and were just sitting there...I

was thinking that God put me here so I could sing like I just did...I'll wait to see what He thinks I should do when I'm older. But it could be there's only one thing He really wants for you to do, and the rest is up to you. (p. 136)¹¹

A spiritual highlight of Coles's research was a visit to a fifth grade classroom at a Lawrenceville, Massachusetts elementary school. Coles (1990) recorded one girl saying, "it matters to me that I do one good deed every day" (p.311).¹² Coles (1990) also met with a boy who described life as a journey. "You think about God---how He had his bad times, too...You march through life...It's a long march---if you're lucky." (p. 316)¹³ Cole's (1990) expansive research concludes that educational spirituality is how "we connect with one another, move in and out of one another's lives, teach and heal and affirm one another, across space and time---"(p.335).¹⁴ In music education, Dr. Cole's humanistic connections theory is germane to a successful and fulfilling program. An elaboration of Cole's truths appear later in this paper. For now, it is necessary to make a clear distinction between spirituality and sacredness, particularly in music education.

Clarifying Spirituality and Sacredness

Spirituality and sacredness, while interrelated, are not synonymous. It is vitally important to understand the difference between sacred music and teaching music with spirituality, particularly given the laws separating church and state. Educator Parker Palmer (1993) provides his definition of spirituality and sacredness:

Any attempt to develop "a spirituality of education" is full of peril. It invites a host of resistances, distortions, and misunderstandings. Education is supposed to deal with the tangible realities of science and the marketplace. Spirituality is supposed to address an invisible world whose reality is dubious at best.... While rejecting laws allowing moments of vocal prayer, I am calling for a mode of knowing and educating that is prayerful through and through. What do I mean by prayer? I mean the practice of relatedness. (p.11)¹⁵

Parker emphasizes forging deep connections between people in an educational setting. Cole's humanistic research supports Parker's spiritual philosophy: When students know that their music teacher/conductor truly cares about them as complete human beings, they are inspired to make greater efforts in their music making. Furthermore, Parker feels that these deep human connections bring God to earth, not just prayer. Twentieth century education philosopher Parker Palmer and eighteenth century composer Johann Sebastian Bach share the same ideal: all of their creative and meaningful earthly works, sacred and secular, are inspired by God.

The United Kingdom's national curriculum includes a mandatory spiritual philosophy. British educator James Hall (2000) explains his country's definition of spirituality this way: (It) is not used here in a purely religious or ecclesiastical sense but in the broader, secular terms determined by, among others, UK government agencies. In this definition, spirituality is seen as fundamental to the human condition, to do with the universal search for individual identity, the search for meaning and purpose in life, the values by which to live and the development of fundamental human characteristics. (p. 134)¹⁶

This explanation of spirituality reveals three fundamental human needs: self-understanding, one's contribution to the world, and compassion. While current United States curriculum documents do not include such a philosophy, many leading educators believe that including spirituality in the classroom is beneficial for the students' emotional and cognitive development. One example of this type of spiritual program is called the Open Circle Curriculum sponsored by Wellesley College. Open Circle time for students promotes a cooperative classroom environment, helps solve interpersonal problems and builds positive relationships.

Spirituality and sacredness are often synonymous to classically trained music educators. During their musical training, these teachers study and perform substantial works of sacred music, which are embedded with religious spirituality. Johann Sebastian Bach's Mass in B minor and Ernst Bloch's Sacred Service are two examples of sacred works that are deeply spiritual. Bloch writes "I try to feel within me and to translate into my music: the holy fervor of the race which is latent in our soul"(p.224).¹⁷ Religious hymns, anthems, cantatas, and instrumental pieces elevate one's spiritual consciousness through sacred texts and music. The spiritual focal points of the Mass in B minor and the Sacred Service are the holy words and the passionate vocal and instrumental music infused with musical and religious symbolism.

Spirituality in music education, however, is different from spirituality in sacred music. Spiritual education elevates the student's appreciation of his/her physical, emotional and cognitive being through a sensitively approached musical experience. While this can be achieved using religious works, the spiritual elements of these works are not the focal point; the spirituality of the student is the focal point.

Music educators perform a treacherous balancing act separating church and state while teaching sacred music. Students are naturally curious, and crave truth in their lives. The teacher's admirable intentions are to use sacred works to teach religious tolerance and understanding. It cannot be overemphasized that teachers must consult with experts in the religious music being taught (e.g. clergy, students, parents or teachers.)

Music educators should also be aware of district policy concerning sacred music in the classroom and in performances. The music teacher then provides factual information about the musical piece and its meaning. Obviously, music teachers must not proselytize their religious beliefs in the classroom or rehearsal hall.

Many superb works of music have strong religious overtones. An insightful, aware and sensitive teacher can effectively use sacred music to teach musical concepts. Elliott (1995) states that this pedagogy upholds the "syntactic parameters of musical design including melody, harmony, and rhythm... and nonsyntactic parameters of musical design including timbre, texture, tempo, articulation and dynamics" (p.93).¹⁸ The following example describes one of my successful experiences including a sacred work of music in a public school performance. My 7th grade string ensemble performed "Amazing Grace" at its winter concert in January 1983. I selected "Amazing Grace" for its pedagogical components: anacrusis, 3/4 time, slurring with sensitive bow control across the strings, optional third position fingerings, phrasing, tonal centering, an andante tempo marking and dotted rhythms. When I introduced "Amazing Grace" at the concert, I focused my remarks solely on these syntactic and nonsyntactic parameters. However, there was still spirituality in that performance, not because of the religious nature of the piece, but because of the children's sensitive musical interpretation. Furthermore, the parents felt a spiritual connection to their children when they observed their beautiful performance.

The potential problems of studying and/or performing sacred music in public schools are always present. Even the most seasoned and sensitive music educator must take great care to investigate past sacred performance practices to avoid repeating pitfalls. If the school history warrants an avoidance of all sacred pieces of music at concerts, the teacher might consider using sacred works during class time only. Today's emphasis on multiculturalism may steer the music teacher away from the controversies of religious music in school toward the more fruitful possibilities of world-awareness education.

The Student's Cultural Spirit

It is far more challenging, as well as educationally rewarding and successful, to explore and perform music that is linked to cultural diversity rather than religion. Elliott (1995) writes about multicultural efficacy and challenges in the music classroom as a means for truly understanding the diversity of the human race:

A people's music is not only something they make; a people's music is something they are. Thus, to share the music of one's culture with others is to risk that outsiders will not understand and respect one's self. Accordingly, music practices are often highly inclusive and exclusive at the very same time. (p.197)¹⁹

A spiritual approach to music education respects a student's innate cultural musicking, and then shares it with the music class in a respectful, meaningful and authentic manner. It is best to work with the student, his/her parents, and other resource people to authentically learn the words, musical subtleties and performance practices of culturally based music. Ideally, the student, his/her parents, or resource person presents their music for the class using authentic instruments, singing, dancing and costumes. The class has the opportunity to ask questions and share observations. The class then learns the musical piece and invites the parents to return to the class for assessment.

I recently enjoyed a spiritually sensitive multicultural music exchange with a Pakistani family that had just joined my school community. Their son, Samson, was one of my beginning flute students. At Back-to-School Night, they looked nervous and out of place. I welcomed them to school and described my interest in learning a child's folk song from their native country. They proudly taught me a Pakistani children's song. This song reminds children to "be a light in the world by demonstrating good judgment and character." When Samson's flute class was musically and spiritually ready, I taught them this song on their instruments, using the characteristic "bending" of the Pakistani scale. We also sang the words, with Samson coaching us. Samson and his parents felt more than included in the school

community; they felt respected. The flute students became aware of the cultural similarities and differences of the East and West. Most importantly, the students engaged in a spiritually focused musical experience of respect and understanding.

Estelle Jorgensen (1997) poses the difficult query of whose music is to be studied: "In a multicultural society in which various spheres of musical validity coexist, the question of whose music is to be taught in state-supported schools has political and musical ramifications and important policy implications" (p.41).²⁰ For example, classrooms throughout America are becoming increasingly diverse. A typical classroom in northern New Jersey includes a veritable United Nations of cultural backgrounds. Obviously, it is not feasible to study the musical heritages of every student in a classroom; this is not the sole and primary purpose of multicultural education. When using a spiritual approach to multicultural music, i.e. honoring the cultural spirit of one student, the spirits of all students become validated through a musical experience that reinforces respect, dignity, awareness and self-esteem. All students use the study of one person's music to become increasingly aware of his/her cultural/musical similarities and differences.

Effectiveness of Spiritual Educational Philosophies in the Music Classroom

Music Education Spirituality is a relatively unexplored subject that deserves greater and more serious attention. The human spirit and its connection to music-creating and music-listening has been recognized for thousands of years. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) wrote:

...it is clear that we are affected in a certain manner, both by many other kinds of music and not least by the melodies of Olympus; for these admittedly make our souls enthusiastic, and enthusiasm is an affection of the character of the soul. (p. 18)²¹

Aristotle saw the correlation between music and the development of one's character. His philosophy still continues to be explored. However, the lack of research in spiritual music

education creates an unfortunate vacuum in this field. Luckily, the growing research in spiritual general education directly relates to music education. In a "nut-shell," educational spirituality inspires the music teacher to take an even more humanistic look at his/her classroom attitudes and activities.

A number of education historians and philosophers have espoused the need for spirituality in the classroom. Their theories, while not specifically geared for music education, are highly relevant in this artistic field. Music education philosopher Estelle Jorgensen (1997) agrees with the connectedness of general education and music education:

...I shall suggest a set of paired concepts in which one is dialectically related to the other...musical and educational issues, although I prefer to think of them collectively. Together they comprise a broad view of music education and are interrelated, and the whole also seems greater than the sum of its parts. (p. 72)²²

Jorgensen feels that philosophies of general education have the potential to enrich the quality of music education. Indeed, when all teachers work together sharing ideals, the students benefit from powerful cross-curricular connections and an esprit de corps from their teachers.

Let us now turn to two leading twentieth century spiritual educators: Ron Miller and Parker Palmer. Their philosophies have relevant and infinite potential for enriching the music classroom and the rehearsal hall.

Holistic educator Ron Miller is an historian of alternative education with an impressive resume: He is the founding publisher and editor of Holistic Education Review, founder of the Holistic Education Press, and cofounder of the Bellwether School and Family Resource Center in Vermont. Ron Miller's holistic philosophy is reminiscent of Laurie Lane-Zucker's mystery of life philosophy. Regarding students, Miller (1999) states that holistic education "is a way of engaging them with the world, in all its complexity" (p. 195).²³ Miller (1999) outlines four

basic principles of holistic education:

First, holistic educators believe that the human being is a complex existential entity made up of many, many different layers of meaning. We are biological creatures. We are ecological creatures. We have a psychological dimension, and emotional dimension. We live in an ideological environment, a social and cultural environment, and have a spiritual core. We are very complex creatures because of the interplay and interactions of all of these different meanings. You cannot just take any single one of them and say, 'Oh, that's who we are.'" (p. 193)²⁴

Miller's "different layers of meanings" of general education correspond to the many different layers of spiritually sensitive musical meanings. What follows are two spiritual examples of his suggested subject areas not usually associated with music: biology and ecology.

Biologically, spiritual music teachers make students aware of, and respectful of, how their bodies create music. In vocal music, vocal chord tissues and their functioning are explored to promote correct singing and prevent unnecessary damage. The teacher also explains the connection between the lungs and diaphragm to promote optimal breath support. In instrumental music, breath support for the woodwinds and brasswinds is also taught for beautiful and long-lasting tone. One can relate this concept of biological breath to spiritual breath: "Just as your breath gives you life, your breath also makes your instrument come alive." Violin and viola students gain understanding of their skeletal and muscular systems of their upper body, arms and hands. It is miraculous how these systems function together with the help of tendons, to create strength for energy and movement. Posture is emphasized in all forms of music making, to include muscle and bone alignment. Good posture also promotes heightened self-image and therefore, self-esteem.

Ecologically, spiritual music teachers consider the environment and the student's impact on its balance or imbalance. Instruments' materials are discussed, emphasizing their worldly

origin. In a string instrument class, the teacher describes the various parts of a bow: Brazilian pernambucco wood, Mongolian horse hair, silver and snake skin wrap, ivory tip, ebony frog and mother-of-pearl decorations. Each of these bow parts are to be respected for their beauty and for their diverse, worldly locations of origin. Indeed, the bow is also a multicultural work of art! The following questions are posed to the students: How are these precious, rare materials being replenished to keep the world whole? How can we maintain our bows to last a lifetime and beyond? When playing your violins and violas, how can you create sounds that will bring "freshness" and beauty to the environment? How would your instruments be played to cause noise pollution? These questions engage students in deep thinking about the world's ecology and their power to affect nature's balance. Connecting students to their place and purpose in the world is a vital part of spiritual education.

Ron Miller's philosophy of holistic education mirrors music education. Just as each student is affected by "many different layers of meaning," music, too, possesses many different layers of meanings. Each of these different layers, both in holistic education and music education, affect each student in a very personal way.

Spiritual educator, Parker J. Palmer (1993) believes in an undercurrent of education which he calls "the hidden curriculum." This "hidden curriculum" is the students':

relationship with the subject matter and how it relates to them and the[ir] world. If we believed that knowing requires a personal relation between the knower and the known (as some new epistemologies tell us) our students would be invited to learn by interacting with the world, not by viewing it from afar. The classroom would be regarded as an integral, interactive part of reality, not a place apart...students would discover that we are in the world and the world is within us; that truth is not a statement about reality but a living relationship between ourselves and the world. (p. 35)²⁵

Respecting the "hidden curriculum" in music education respects the students' current knowledge, understanding and strengths. This personal curriculum has the potential for being

the most significant part of the teacher's curriculum. By getting into the minds of students, the teacher knows the students' interests, fears, strengths and prejudices. The teacher then has the power to make his/her lessons more relevant and meaningful.

I have found that the first instrumental music lesson of first-year students is the perfect opportunity to begin teaching with the "hidden curriculum." During this thirty minute class, I learn about students' emotional and cognitive selves. The fifth grade students enthusiastically enter my classroom, carrying their instrument cases, their faces beaming with nervousness and anticipation. We sit in an informal circle, which I imagine as a campfire. We introduce ourselves, and I ask the students to privately write about their feelings about taking lessons this first year. Their brief responses, complete with post summer vacation spelling errors, speak spiritual volumes:

- I'm excited taking lessons on flute this year because this is my instrument. I hope to be a master at it and make great tones and songs. I'm concerned about how difficult it will be.
- I feel good learning to play the saxophone. My dream is to learn how to play it. My concerns are the concerts because I'm shy.
- I feel scared because I might fail. I want to be good at violin but I could only play with numbers.
- I'm very excited about the Trombone! When I saw the play *The Music Man* I heard the Trombone for the first time. It sounded nice and I wanted to learn how to play it. My worry is I tried buzzing with my lips and I'm not that good at it.²⁶

We then talk about their instruments, sharing facts and insights about history, materials, playing techniques, famous musicians and much more. I allow the students' interests to lead this informative "lecture." I then photograph each student with his/her instrument. This picture is then mounted on a special personal curriculum sheet, tying the hidden curriculum together. The pictures and sheets are featured on my bulletin board. They are an educational highlight in the school.

When the students return for only their second lesson, it is as though we have known each

other for a much longer period of time. We proceed to connect even more deeply through the initial power of musicking. The instruments' first tones are a fugue of cacophony: scratchy and smooth, honking and sonorous, piercing and soothing, clanging and pinging, blurted and measured, bellowing and whispering. Passersby are awed by my patience. They are even more awed that I refer to all of these sounds as "a joyful noise." The students have created this world of sounds. They are the masters of this world and their music. Each of their sounds has an individual fingerprint on it, even though they are influenced and inspired by one another. Their sense of discovery is endless. The spiritual environment creates safety; they are not afraid to ask questions, make mistakes, learn from one another and embrace one another. The students know that we support and encourage one another every step of the way. By the last week of June, their skill level is far advanced. Thankfully, through a spiritual approach, their acceptance of their vulnerabilities and mistakes is also far advanced. These fifth grade students are promoted to middle school, ready to enter their years of pre-adolescence more humanly.

Miller and Palmer agree that psychology contributes a particularly vital "layer of meaning" in the music classroom. Psychologically, the holistic music educator is flexible with his/her lesson plans to reflect the emotional needs of the students. This psychologically sensitive teacher/conductor uses the initial mood of the students as they enter the classroom or rehearsal hall to make two educationally and spiritually sound determinations: How the music experience will begin, and how it will proceed to ultimately accomplish the teacher's/conductor's goals. Music psychologist James L. Mursell agrees with these two key factors. Mursell (1937) states:

...a musical composition is eminently capable of enforcing a mood or a succession of moods. Indeed, the effect of a composition may be so powerful that the immediately preceding emotional effective state of the listener does not greatly matter, because it becomes swiftly obliterated. (p. 205)²⁷

The teacher tunes in to this entrance-mood of the students to quickly make flexible lesson-plan decisions. These initial observations make educational goals proceed efficiently and sensitively. For example, I recently noticed that my students seemed tired and distracted after their extended overnight field trip to Mystic Seaport, Connecticut. They were worried that they did not have sufficient time to practice their homework assignment. I reassured them and said, "We'll devote today's lesson to reviewing material and getting 'back on track.' Let's also look a little ahead in the music book and learn a sea chanty that reflects your trip to Mystic Seaport." I began this lesson by going into the minds of the students and gradually escorting them into my original lesson plan. This respect for the children's needs resulted in an even more worthwhile lesson than I had originally planned.

The band or orchestra conductor that demonstrates flexibility rehearses with increased enjoyment and accomplishment. When I conducted the high school orchestra, I frequently felt a high level of excess energy from the members of this teenage ensemble. Using spiritual flexibility, I chose to go with this burst of energy and demonstrated the proper bowing technique for increasingly faster note values. I took this flexible lesson one step further and provided the vocabulary to describe various energetic bowing techniques: "balzato, jete, martele, marque, saltato, and strappato." Learning these French and Italian words created many multicultural teachable moments. I then rehearsed the most energetic piece in the ensemble's current repertoire and asked the students, "Which of our warm-up bowing techniques is the most appropriate for this composition? Why? How would the piece sound if we played it with a different bowing technique?" My lesson plan was still accomplished, with an even richer result, because the students were in the position of making a key decision, based on knowledge and experience.

The philosophies of Miller and Palmer are not just for students; holistic education and hidden curriculum should be part of the teacher's life-long learning process. Our students can teach us about the world and ourselves as educators every day. As professionals, we must keep a spiritually open mind to accept and embrace the riches our students have to offer. This sense of mutual respect elevates the teacher, student, school, community and world.

Concluding Thoughts for Spiritual Reflection

Dr. Frederick Stokley, Ridgewood, New Jersey Superintendent of Schools, spoke about educational spirituality in his back-to-school address on September 4, 2001. Dr. Stokley indicated that:

Researchers working in the area of spiritual intelligence have listed some competencies, skills, or qualities of a spiritually intelligent person. They are:

- A high degree of self-awareness.
- The capacity to be inspired by vision and values.
- The ability to face suffering and transcend pain.
- A holistic world view.
- An appreciation of diversity.
- Being "field" independent--this is possessing the capacity to stand against the crowd or work against convention.
- Spontaneity.
- A marked tendency to ask "why" and "what" questions and seek fundamental answers.
- Compassion. ²⁸

Clearly, all of these spiritual qualities can be appropriately included in the musical experience for students and their teachers. Indeed, the spiritually intelligent music educator and his/her students will reap many rewards in their learning and performing by infusing these competencies, skills and qualities into their classrooms. My philosophy of spiritual music education can be capsulated in the following original mnemonic:

S ensistivity The teacher demonstrates empathy and flexibility.

P ersonality	The uniqueness and importance of each student is valued.
I nsights	The students' knowledge and ideas are intrinsic in the class.
R aison d'etre	Current and long-term humanistic goals are nurtured.
I ndependence	Standards of excellence support the students' positive self image.
T ogetherness	Respect promotes optimum musicking and relationships.

The words of the mnemonic compatibly pair to add even greater meaning to my definition of "SPIRIT." The Sensitivity of the teacher will embrace the unique musical Personality of each student. When the teacher respects the musical Insights of the student, the student's self-esteem is bolstered, thereby giving the student a positive Raison d'etre. By teaching with the highest standard of excellence, the student's sense of Independence is strengthened. This promotes musical Togetherness on the highest emotional level. Positive connections between the teacher, student and music are forged, creating a spiritual musical experience that resonates for a lifetime.

Endnotes

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28. Reprinted with the Permission of Dr. Frederick Stokely, Superintendent of Schools, Ridgewood, NJ.